

# Keneally ditches metro



The way we have covered the campaign against the CBD Metro.

Kate Carr

PREMIER Kristina Keneally delivered the news Rozelle had been waiting for on Sunday when she buried the \$5.3 billion CBD Metro once and for all.

In January, Ms Keneally said the Government had stopped acquiring businesses in Rozelle to make way for the underground rail system, and the suburb had been on tenterhooks ever since amid mounting speculation the project would be axed.

The uncertainty finally ended on Sunday when Ms Keneally revealed the \$5.3 billion allocated for the CBD Metro would be reallocated under the State Government's new Metropolitan Transport Plan.

Ms Keneally said the Government's new priorities included heavy rail links to the north-west and south-west, a dedicated Western Express railway line, plus an expanded light rail system in the city and the Inner West.

"It's absolutely fantastic news," Rozelle Residents Action Group spokesperson Mark Wallis said.

Adore Pharmacy owner Chadi Tahan, who would have lost his business if the metro had gone ahead, said he was planning to have a few celebratory drinks.

"It is amazing we have won," Mr Tahan said. "It's honestly been like a trip to hell and back."

Leichhardt mayor Jamie Parker also welcomed the news, but said the Government had wasted time and money pursuing a project that was flawed from the outset.

"It has taken tens of millions of dollars, massive costs to our community and business before the government admitted they were wrong on the CBD metro," Cr Parker said.

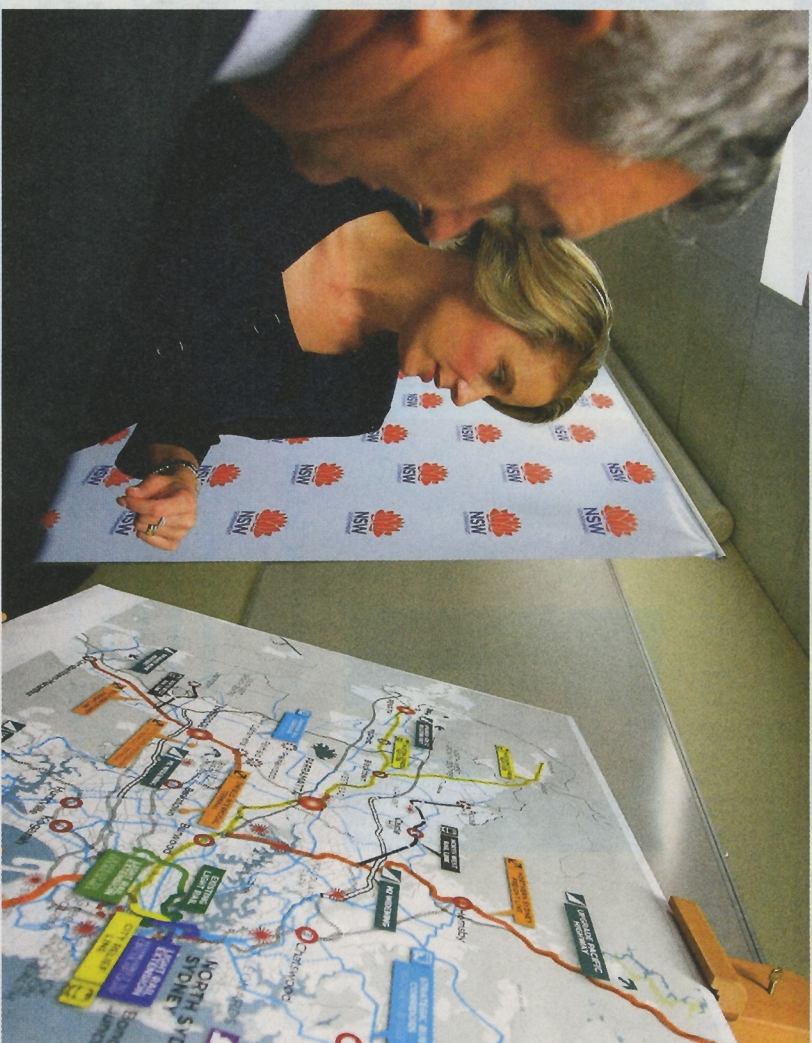
State Balmain MP Verity Firth said the fact the Government had shelved the metro was a victory for democracy given the strength of feeling against the project in Rozelle.

Ms Firth said that while she supported high speed public transport, the specifics of the Rozelle metro plan, such as the short length of the track, the fact there was no funding to proceed beyond Rozelle and the impact on local business had worried her.

"I did have concerns about the metro and I did campaign internally regarding them," Ms Firth said.

However, while the CBD metro may be dead, the Government's headaches from the project are not quite over.

Litigation appears to be the next hurdle on the horizon, with Rozelle Village, the company behind the redevelopment of the Balmain Leagues Club site, flagging the possibility of legal action earlier this month when speculation about the future of the project intensified.



Premier Kristina Keneally and Planning Minister Tony Kelly at the launch of the Metropolitan Transport Plan.  
Photo: BRAD HUNTER

## KENEALLY'S METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PLAN

- Total spending: \$50.2 billion over 10 years
- Cancellation of CBD Metro
- Deferral of West Metro for at least 10 years
- \$500 million for light rail extension from Lilyfield to Dulwich Hill and from Circular Quay to Barangaroo and Haymarket. Work set to start immediately
- \$158 million over 10 years on building and improving new cycle networks
- \$3.1 billion over 10 years to be spent on additional train carriages
- \$2.1 billion for southwest rail link by 2016
- To begin building the \$4.53 billion Western Express link between CBD and Parramatta by 2015
- To begin building the \$6.7 billion northwest rail link between Epping and Rouse Hill in 2016
- 1000 new buses for Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle and Central Coast
- \$400 million over 10 years on new car-parks
- \$225 million over 10 years to buy six new ferries